

VZCZCXRO4318
OO RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #0939/01 1211239
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 011239Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2550
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0208
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0231
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4828
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 1559
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 7163
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 6098
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ISLAMABAD 000939

NOFORN
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/01/2019
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: MALAKAND DIVISION: BUNER OPERATIONS IN FOURTH DAY
AND PEACE TALKS RESUME

REF: A. ISLAMABAD 887
[B](#). ISLAMABAD 901
[C](#). ISLAMABAD 912

Classified By: CDA Gerald Feierstein for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

[1](#). (S/NF) Summary. On May 1, Pakistan military operations in Buner District (Malakand Division, Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP)) entered their fourth day. Security forces cut a major militant supply line to the Ambela pass and established a Frontier Corps (FC) headquarters in Daggar on April 30. FC ground elements continue to meet heavy resistance and directed vehicle-borne explosive attacks as they push through various strategic lines to Daggar. In a May 1 meeting Pakistan Military 11th Corps and U.S. Special Operations Command - Forward (SOC-FWD) Chief agreed to establish an intelligence fusion cell for the 11th Corps and to train operators for better information sharing and imagery capabilities.

[2](#). (SBU) TNSM chief Maulana Sufi Mohammad attended a meeting with NWFP government officials on May 1 in Timergara, Lower Dir. Following the meeting, NWFP and TNSM spokesmen held a joint press conference and announced that the dialogue had resumed and the parties continued to work toward the formation of the Darul Qaza (appellate courts) as promised in the Nizam-e-Adl. Awami National Party (ANP) senior leader Afrasiab Kattak announced on April 30 that the NWFP government would support the Nizam-e-Adl in Malakand Division for two more days before the government took strong action against those taliban who did not lay down arms. End Summary.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN BUNER

[3](#). (S/NF) On May 1, Pakistani military operations in Buner District (Malakand Division, NWFP) entered their fourth day. Ground forces cut a major militant supply line to the Ambela pass and established a Frontier Corps (FC) headquarters in Daggar (main city within Buner) on April 30. In a May 1 meeting with Frontier Corps Inspector General Major General Tariq Khan, U.S. Special Operations Command - Forward (SOC-FWD) Chief was informed that the FC plan to move south of Daggar, with the hope of keeping the fight out of the populated urban centers. Khan reported that his ground troops have been experiencing significant resistance and coming in contact with increased levels of explosive-laden vehicles and suicide attacks. Additional reinforcements have been sent to Daggar to assist the 3rd Commando Division of the Special Security Group (SSG) currently holding Daggar.

¶4. (SBU) In a late afternoon press conference on May 1, Pakistani Military Director General for the Inter Services Public Relations office, Major General Athar Abbas announced that approximately 55 militants had been killed by security forces over the last 24 hours and at least 50 militant-owned vehicles, four of which were laden with explosives, had been destroyed. Abbas also reported that life in Buner was beginning to return to normal, with roads and shops being reopened and the district-wide curfew being relaxed.

¶5. (S/NF) In a separate May 1 meeting with SOC-FWD Chief, 11th Corps Chief of Staff Brigadier General Riaz Amar accepted a U.S. offer to assist the 11th Corps in establishing an intelligence fusion cell at their headquarters in Peshawar. SOC-FWD will start training on the various imagery and communications equipment for the designated operators as soon as senior 11th Corps leadership officially approves the Cell.

TNSM-NWFP TALKS RESUME

¶6. (SBU) On April 30, Tehreek-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM) chief Maulana Sufi Mohammad reemerged in public for the first time since April 25 and announced that talks with the NWFP government would remain stalled as long as the military operations in Buner and Lower Dir continued. He further stated that these military operations violated the Swat peace agreement and would only further the talibanization of the Malakand Division. However, on May 1, Sufi resumed talks in Timergara, Lower Dir, meeting with NWFP

ISLAMABAD 00000939 002 OF 002

Information Minister Mian Iftikhar to discuss the "law and order" situation in Malakand Division and the formation of the Darul Qaza (appellate courts), the formation of which Sufi has publicly linked to ushering peace in Malakand.

¶7. (SBU) Following the meeting, TNSM spokesman Ameer Izzat and Iftikhar held a joint press conference to announce that the deadlock over the appointment of the qazis (judges) for the Darul Qaza had been broken, and the two sides were closer to establishment of the courts under the Nizam-e-Adl regulation. When asked by press, Izzat reiterated the TNSM stance that these courts will bring peace and shari'a law throughout all of Malakand Division. Additionally, he assured press that once these courts were operational, any militant who raises a weapon will be considered a "rebel" and against the writ of the government. Both spokesmen said a second round of talks will be held with the District Commissioners throughout the Malakand Division and district political party leaders, date undetermined.

OPERATIONS IN SWAT?

¶8. (SBU) Awami National Party (ANP) senior leader Afrasiab Kattak announced on April 30 that the NWFP government would support the existence of the Nizam-e-Adl in Malakand Division for two more days before the government would take strong action against those taliban who did not lay down arms. Media reports indicate that crime and militant activity in and around Mingora continues to rise and the citizens are preparing for a rumored upcoming Pakistani military operation. ANP leader Afzal Zala, who remained in Swat throughout the taliban takeover, was medivaced for treatment; local observers saw this as a sign of expected Army action.

AL QAIDA WEIGHS IN

¶9. (SBU) Meanwhile, the press covered reports of a 29-page "Call to Arms" by al Qaida Commander, Abu Yahya al-Libi, directed at Pakistanis. In his message, he encouraged the Muslims of Pakistan to prepare to fight the Pakistan military and those that support them.

